CLATSOP COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

History Matters

January/February 2024

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- Twenty Years of Progress
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Party Like It's 1924!

We have two great events coming up that take us back to the 1920s; our lecture series *Thursday Night Talks*, or *TNT*, January 17th at Ft. George Brewery's Lovell Showroom, and our annual *Casino Night*, February 17th at the Heritage Museum.

William and Julia Shorey with daughters Zenobia and Victoria, Oakland, California, circa 1899

Thursday Night Talks

Oregon Black Pioneers Executive Director, Zachary Stocks, presents his findings on the Shorey family. In the 1910s, Captain William Shorey and his family were prominent members of Oakland, California's Black upper class. Yet in the 1920 census, his wife Julia (now a widow) and their children were living in the tiny town of Hammond, Oregon. How did this wealthy Black family end up in such a remote locale? Learn more as Zachary takes us through his findings.

Page from a Shorey family scrapbook, images courtesy San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park (left) and Oakland Public Library (above)

Casino Night

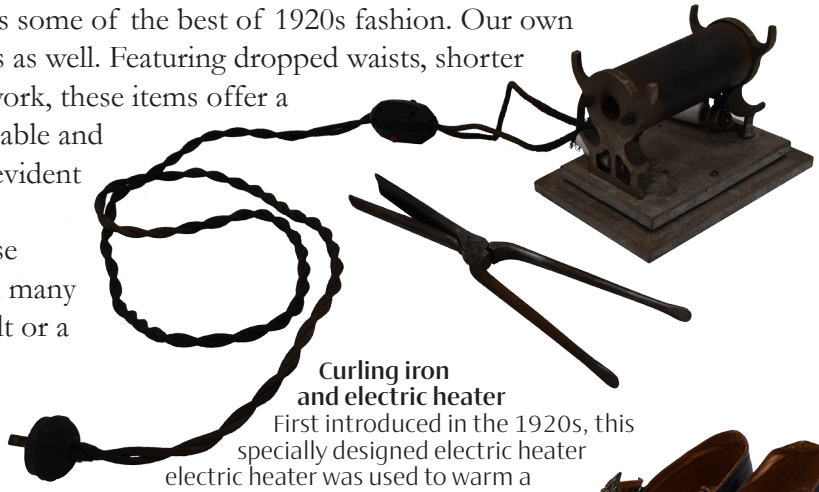
Join us as our Heritage Museum becomes a speakeasy for *Casino Night*. There will be plenty of gambling and drinks in this juice joint, plus a costume contest, so get all dolled up in your best glad rags. It will be the bee's knees...but you didn't hear it from me.

Curator's Corner

by Dr. Chelsea K. Vaughn, Curator

The *Casino Night* Costume Contest showcases some of the best of 1920s fashion. Our own collection includes some great 1920s pieces as well. Featuring dropped waists, shorter (then Victorian) skirts, and intricate beadwork, these items offer a glimpse into the lives of the more fashionable and glamorous of Astoria's population. Less evident in our collection are clothes representing everyday life—and for good reason. Those items were worn until they wore out, and many had a second life in a bedspread or a quilt or a repurposed child's garment.

Silk beaded gown
Worn by Marie Helene Rahles Osburn, this dress showcases elements of 1920s evening fashion, including a dropped waist, short skirt length, hints of skin through a shear overlay, and extensive beadwork intended, in part, to distract from the garment's scant nature. Marie was part of the city's high society. Her husband Austin operated the opulent Hotel Astoria (now the Astor Building Apartments) begining in the mid-1920s.



Curling iron and electric heater
First introduced in the 1920s, this specially designed electric heater electric heater was used to warm a curling iron, a noted improvement over heating curling irons on a kitchen stovetop.

Black leather heels with a gold beaded vamp
The 1920s, with its ever-shortening skirts, marked an important change in women's shoes. Suddenly, they were visible!

Musings

The Clatsop County Historical Society (CCHS) had a banner year in 2023! Thank you for being Members – you are, in large part, what makes us go.

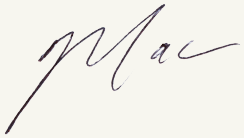
2023 marked my 20th anniversary as your Executive Director. It continues to be my honor and pleasure to be a part of such an important, vibrant, healthy organization. In those twenty years we have accomplished so much together.

When I started the annual attendance was 23,039. In 2023, we welcomed, entertained, and educated 95,000 visitors from all fifty states and more than twenty-five nations! I don't think any other museum in Oregon can boast that level of growth. Similarly, we've gone from just four annual events to schedule that includes *Thursday Night Talks*, *Casino Night, Mother's Day Tea & Scones*, *Old Fashioned Fun & Games*, *Goonies Day*, *Talking Tombstones*, and *Tea & Plum Pudding*, among others. We have taken the lead on a number of local civic celebrations, most notably the *Astoria Bicentennial* in 2011. We've hosted travelling exhibits, created new and permanent exhibits, published books, and broadcast the weekly radio show *An Adventure in History*. Through it all, we have continued to publish *Cumtux*, our quarterly historical journal.

Two substantial developments have had a tremendous impact on our operations and our audience. The first was creating the Oregon Film Museum (OFM) in the old County Jail in 2010. In 2023, 52,507 people visited OFM, a small, 800 square-foot facility. We have clearly outgrown the space and have exciting plans for an expansion across the street. You'll be hearing a lot more about that this year! Second, we have undertaken an ambitious project to digitize our collections. Spurred by CCHS volunteers and supporters Tom & Annie Smith, we acquired an impressive scanning set-up and started a relationship with the Internet Archive. Generous support from the Huisking Foundation allowed us to hire a Digital Archivist. We have made thousands of our own items available on-line along with those of more than a dozen local organizations. This represents a wealth of material that has been both donated and collected over the years. I am thrilled for it to be digitally preserved and made more easily accessible to the public.

I'm excited that I get to be a part of all of these things, but, most of all, I love the people I get to interact with. We have a tremendous and professional staff. I have been fortunate to work with a great Board of Directors—community leaders that volunteer their time and talents to helping us fulfill our mission. CCHS would not survive or thrive without dedicated volunteers that give their enthusiastic efforts in so many ways: greeting visitors as docents in the Flavel House, serving plum pudding to excited guests, dressing in costume and standing in a wet, cold cemetery for *Talking Tombstones*, working in the Liisa Penner Research Center & Archives, scanning photographs, or being a part of the Flavel House Garden Society. Formed just a few years ago, this last group has completely transformed the Flavel House grounds for the better. Amazing! They are there every Wednesday, stop by and say hello or, better yet, pull a few weeds or spread some mulch with them. And you, loyal Members, I love that you feel a part of us, that you take ownership in CCHS. I like when you come to one of our events or tell us you liked the new exhibit or issue of Cumtux and I even like when you tell us what we can do better. It means you care. Thank you for that. I think you'll like what 2024 will bring and what the next twenty years will look like.

I hope you will all continue to be a part of the fun.



-McAndrew Burns,
Executive Director

CLATSOP COUNTY
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Cilvia Winters' great-granddaughter and namesake learned more about her family heritage when she found a scrapbook of her great-grandmother's adventures as a competitive log roller on the Internet Archive.

We now have over 3,200 items available online! Check them out at the web address below or the QR code:

https://archive.org/details/clatsopcountyhistoricalsociety

Digital Archive News

by Julie Burpee, Digital Archivist

A great place to start looking for answers to your Clatsop County questions is the CCHS Internet Archive site. There are many ways to easily access this information:

- Some people find our QR codes easy – just point your camera at it and click the link that comes up on your smartphone.
- Some folks prefer to access the info in a more traditional way, by putting "Clatsop County free texts" into the search engine
- Even other folks have told us that they like going through the www.astoriamuseums.org website so they can explore the other CCHS museums as well. The Internet Archive link is located there through the "Explore" tab, and then under "Research."

No matter how you get here, the CCHS Internet Archive strives to make it easy for you to do your research, whatever the topic. Once you get to our www.archive.org account, you will see thumbnail images of 35-plus unique collections. You may choose one of those for more specific topics, or you may use the search bar at the top to search among more than 3200 items. You will notice there are two ways to search: metadata or text.

- Metadata includes title, author, big key words, etc.
- Text search will search every typed page for your entry. If you are searching more than one word, don't forget to put quotation marks around it so you don't get every "the" or "John."

I hope this has helped you better understand how to best use the CCHS Internet Archive for your personal research. Please reach out to us at the Heritage Museum with any questions!

A great-great-grandson of Rev. Aldof Riipa, researching from California, discovered this image of his great-great-grandfather and grandmother through our Internet Archive collections.

Calling all Middle and High School Social Science Teachers!

On January 29th, the Clatsop County Historical Society (CCHS), along with the Oregon Historical Society (OHS) and the Columbia River Maritime Museum (CRMM), is offering a free, half-day workshop to prepare you to lead your students as they explore local history through Oregon History Day part of National History Day. Come, learn more about Oregon History Day and the resources available at CCHS and CRMM.

This event is open to all area Middle and High School Social Science Teachers, but space is limited. Register at: https://crmmeducation.wufoo.com/forms/middle-high-school-teacher-pd/

"An Afternoon with Liisa Penner"

The Astoria Public Library is screening filmmaker Ron Walker's short documentary, *An Afternoon with Liisa Penner,* featuring CCHS's own Liisa Penner. A cherished keeper of local history, Liisa has worked as our archivist and the editor of our quarterly *Cumtux Magazine* for over 30 years. In 2019, we celebrated this legacy by renaming the Heritage Museum Archives the Liisa Penner Research Center & Archives. This film will be followed by another of the director's documentaries, *Astoria in the 1950s*, narrated by Liisa. February 17th, 7pm

Winter Hours

January and February are a great time to visit our museums away from the rush of the tourist season. Take the time to learn local history at the Heritage Museum, become better acquainted with the Flavels at the Flavel House Museum, or make your cinematic masterpiece in the Oregon Film Museum's Filmmaker Experience.

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HISTORICAL SOCIETY
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Upcoming Events

January 17: *TNT* featuring Zachary Stocks of Oregon Black Pioneers, Fort George Brewery Lovell Showroom, 1483 Duane Street, doors open at 6

January 29: Oregon History Day Teacher's Workshop, register at: https://crmmeducation.wufoo.com/forms/middle-high-school-teacher-pd/

February 17: *Casino Night*, Heritage Museum, 1618 Exchange Street, 6-10pm

Ongoing Events

Sundays, 8:30-9pm: Mac Burns and Alana Kujala host *An Adventure in History* on KMUN

Wednesdays at 1pm: Flavel House Garden Society Volunteers meet at the Flavel House Grounds

Closing February 2024: *Food for Thought* exhibit at the Heritage Museum, 1618 Exchange Street

Coming up…

Look for our newest exhibit, *Double Vision: The Art and Science of Optical Illusions in Clatsop County,* opening in March at the Heritage Museum.

The Louvre Saloon

Though closed by prohibition, it lives again at the Heritage Museum. Come enjoy the Louvre's historic bar back while taking in some games of chance at our annual *Casino Night*, February 17th, 6-10pm.